

CARL M. BRASHEAR COMMEMORATIVE LUNCHEON  
REMARKS AS DELIVERED BY:  
ADM JOHN C. HARVEY, JR.

THANK YOU ADMIRAL MORNEAU – I’M VERY GLAD YOU COULD BE  
WITH US TODAY.

FAMILY MEMBERS OF MASTER CHIEF BOATSWAIN’S MATE (MASTER  
DIVER) CARL M. BRASHEAR – THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE PRIVILEGE  
OF BEING WITH YOU TODAY AND HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO  
PARTICIPATE IN TODAY’S COMMEMORATION OF A LEGACY OF  
COURAGE, A LEGACY THAT ENRICHES OUR NAVY TODAY, A LEGACY  
THAT IMPACTS EVERY SAILOR WHO WEARS THIS UNIFORM.

CIVIC LEADERS OF HAMPTON ROADS – WE ARE HONORED TO HAVE YOU WITH US. YOU ARE OUR PARTNERS IN THIS GREAT ENTERPRISE THAT MAKES THE HAMPTON ROADS AREA THE FINEST PLACE IN THE WORLD TO HOMEPORT SO MUCH OF OUR NAVY AND SO MANY OF OUR SAILORS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

GOVERNOR WILDER – THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BEING WITH US TODAY. YOUR RECORD OF SERVICE TO THE CITIZENS OF VIRGINIA IS UNEQUALED – STATE SENATOR, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, GOVERNOR AND THEN MAYOR OF RICHMOND.

BUT, WITH THIS AUDIENCE, IN THIS PLACE, AND ON THIS DAY, I WISH TO SALUTE YOU IN PARTICULAR FOR YOUR SERVICE IN UNIFORM, AS A MEMBER OF THE U.S. ARMY WHO SERVED IN COMBAT IN KOREA, DURING OUR FORGOTTEN WAR, FROM 1951-1953 AND WAS DECORATED FOR HEROISM IN BATTLE AT PORK CHOP HILL.

AND FINALLY, TO MY SHIPMATES, ACTIVE AND RETIRED, IN OUR NAVY WHO ARE HERE TODAY; THOSE WHO HAD THE HONOR TO SERVE ALONGSIDE MASTER CHIEF BRASHEAR AND THOSE, LIKE ME, WHO FOLLOWED IN HIS WAKE – THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE TO HELP PAY TRIBUTE TO A SHIPMATE WHO WAS, AND REMAINS, AN EXAMPLE AND INSPIRATION TO US ALL.

I'D LIKE TO EXPLAIN TO YOU WHY I WAS SO GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE HERE TODAY FOR THIS COMMEMORATION. NOT LONG AFTER I BECAME THE CHIEF OF NAVAL PERSONNEL, IT WAS MY SOLEMN DUTY TO REPRESENT THE NAVY AT MASTER CHIEF BRASHEAR'S FUNERAL SERVICE, CONDUCTED NOT TOO FAR FROM HERE IN THE BASE CHAPEL. I KNOW MANY OF YOU WERE THERE AS WELL.

MANY THINGS OCCURRED AT THAT BEAUTIFUL SERVICE – WE MOURNED THE PASSING OF A FATHER, THE PATRIARCH OF A WONDERFUL FAMILY, WE JOINED IN SORROW AT THE LOSS OF A SHIPMATE WHO WAS A GREAT LEADER IN OUR NAVY, BUT WE ALSO RECALLED AND CELEBRATED A LIFE THAT WAS EXTRAORDINARILY RICH AND MARKED BY PROFOUND ACHIEVEMENT.

AND WHILE I SAT THERE AND LISTENED TO MASTER CHIEF BRASHEAR'S SONS AND SHIPMATES SPEAK, I RECEIVED A GREAT GIFT – AN EXTRAORDINARILY IMPORTANT LESSON FOR ME AS THE ONE FUNDAMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE AT THE TIME FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EVERY SAILOR IN OUR NAVY.

AS I SAT IN THAT PEW AND LISTENED AND THOUGHT, I REALIZED MY JOB, MY MOST IMPORTANT JOB, WAS TO GO OUT AND FIND THE OTHER MASTER CHIEF BRASHEARS IN OUR NAVY AND DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO ENABLE THEIR GOD-GIVEN TALENTS TO FLOURISH WITHOUT INSTITUTIONAL HINDRANCE OR RESTRICTIONS OF ANY KIND.

THE FACT IS THAT MASTER CHIEF BRASHEAR, AS IMMENSELY TALENTED AS HE WAS, HAD TO FIGHT THE NAVY EVERY STEP OF THE WAY TO BRING THOSE TALENTS TO BEAR FOR THE NAVY.

COMING INTO OUR NAVY IN 1947 AND SERVING UNTIL 1978, MASTER CHIEF BRASHEAR SERVED HIS CAREER AT A TIME WHEN HE LOVED THE NAVY MUCH MORE THAN THE NAVY LOVED HIM.

BUT LOVE THE NAVY HE DID AND, WITH HIS FIERCE DETERMINATION AND EXTRAORDINARY CAPABILITIES, HE COMPILED A RECORD OF PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT THAT I DO NOT BELIEVE WILL BE EQUALED BY ANYONE, ANY TIME SOON.

WHETHER IT WAS QUALIFYING AS THE NAVY'S FIRST BLACK MASTER DIVER, OR AS THE ONLY ENLISTED OFFICER OF THE DECK (UNDERWAY) ON THE USS SHAKORI (ATF 162), OR BEING SELECTED AS SAILOR OF THE YEAR IN USS TRIPOLI (CVE 64), MASTER CHIEF BRASHEAR LED THE WAY, EVERY DAY FOR 31 YEARS.

HE REPRESENTED EXACTLY WHAT THE NAVY NEEDED THEN AND NEEDS MORE THAN EVER RIGHT NOW; MEN AND WOMEN WITH DRIVE, DETERMINATION, COURAGE AND TALENT. MEN AND WOMEN OF HONOR.

SAILORS WHO CAN WITHSTAND THE TOUGHEST ENVIRONMENTS AND  
WHO THRIVE IN THE ARENA WITH THE TOUGHEST CHALLENGES.

SAILORS WHO ARE DEVOTED TO THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
AND WELL-BEING OF THEIR SHIPMATES.

SAILORS FOR WHOM IT IS THE CONTENT OF THEIR CHARACTER THAT  
MATTERS, AND NOT THE COLOR OF THEIR SKIN.

THOSE ARE THE KIND OF SAILORS WE NEED, SAILORS LIKE MASTER  
CHIEF BRASHEAR.

AND SO I THANK YOU...

I THANK YOU FOR GATHERING HERE TODAY TO HONOR A MAN WHOSE  
LEGACY LIVES ON TODAY.

I THANK YOU FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF SHARING THIS DAY WITH YOU.

BUT MY DEEPEST THANKS GOES TO MASTER CHIEF BOATSWAINS MATE  
CARL M. BRASHEAR, MASTER DIVER, UNITED STATES NAVY, FOR THE  
LESSON HE TAUGHT ME, FOR THE EXAMPLE HE GAVE US AND FOR THE  
LIFE HE GAVE TO HIS NATION AND HIS NAVY. THANK-YOU AND GOD  
BLESS YOU ALL.